

RECOVERY FUNDS AT WORK IN OHIO'S SIXTH DISTRICT

Wilson Joins President Obama to Witness the Stimulus Money Flowing to Ohio

Wilson announces \$395,000 in JAG funds heading to: Athens, Columbiana, Jefferson, Mahoning, Scioto, Belmont, Gallia, Lawrence and Washington Counties

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In the wake of dire news from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, this morning Congressman Charlie Wilson (OH-6) joined President Obama, Gov. Ted Strickland and several other members of the Ohio Congressional Delegation in Columbus to announce some welcome good news: the stimulus money is flowing to Ohio and jobs are being saved.

This morning, the President and Rep. Wilson watched as more than two dozen new police recruits in Columbus were sworn in as officers. In January, these recruits received notices that they would be laid off, before they even got started serving their city. But with the announcement that federal recovery money would soon arrive, Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman said he could afford to have the recruits join the force.

"This is exactly the kind of effect we'd hoped the Recovery Package would have on our communities," Wilson said. "This package has always been about getting America back to work. We saved these young recruits jobs today. That's about two dozen people who won't have to file for unemployment this month."

The nation's unemployment rate jumped to 8.1 percent in February, its highest level in 25 years. The Bureau of Labor Statistics announced this morning that the economy shed another 651,000 jobs last month.

"I don't need to tell the people of this state what statistics like this mean," President Obama said in his address to the recruits. "That is not a future I accept in the United States of America. That is why I signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act into Law."

"This is the highest unemployment rate in 25 years," Wilson said after the event. "4.4 million Americans have now lost their jobs since the recession began. More disturbing is that there are nearly 3 million Americans who've been out of work for six months or more. I'm committed to doing what it takes and to working with my friends across the aisle to get this economy moving again. We inherited this economic crisis after 8 years of disastrous policies and it'll take some time to get us out of this mess, but a celebration like today's shows that we'll do it, bit by bit, job by job."

Following the event in Columbus, Wilson announced that his district would receive \$395,228 in Recovery funding through the Department of Justice's Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program.

“These grants will allow local governments to support or improve law enforcement programs like prevention and education programs or corrections and drug treatment programs, just to name a few examples,” Wilson said.

The complete list of Sixth District recipients includes:

Athens City \$22,006
East Liverpool City \$11,330
Wellsville Village \$10,894
Jefferson County \$29,849
Steubenville City \$51,419
Mahoning County \$13,508
Boardman Township \$47,061
Scioto County \$33,771
Portsmouth City \$83,447
Belmont County \$11,765
Gallia County \$13,944
Lawrence County \$12,419
Marietta City \$16,994
Mingo Junction Village \$13,944
Washington County \$22,877
TOTAL FOR OH-6 = \$395,228

In addition, Wilson welcomed the news that Ohio would receive \$179,808,408 in Federal Transportation Administration funds from the Recovery Package. Of that, \$29,837,234 is for assistance to rural and small urban public transportation systems. These projects could include the construction, renovation or upgrade of a transit system station, or allow a system to acquire, rehabilitate or overhaul their buses or trains.

“I’m pleased that the vote I cast just a few weeks has resulted in this kind of money flowing into Ohio and directly into Ohio’s Sixth District,” Wilson said. “That was the point of using already existing federal distribution formulas, so that the funding would move quickly and put Ohioans to work.”

“With that said, I’m mindful that some of the funding formulas will mean that many of Ohio’s rural areas will have to compete for funding,” Wilson added. “I’ve recently written to Gov. Strickland about my concern that rural areas, like many of the counties that make up Ohio’s Sixth Congressional District, get their fair share of the Recovery Funding.”

In his letter to Gov. Strickland, dated March 5, Wilson wrote:

“Given the urgency associated with dispersing these funds, I agree with Congress’ decision to use existing formulas for programs like Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and the Community Oriented Policing Program (COPS). I think we both understand and can agree that these valuable funds must be distributed quickly, especially to communities with large populations and high poverty levels. However, I am concerned that this distribution process

leaves out rural areas that lack concentrated population centers.

We both know from personal experience that rural Americans make vital contributions to our state and national economies. When I voted for the Recovery Act, I did so knowing that it was meant to help rural Ohioans who are suffering from the same rising unemployment nightmare that our urban and suburban neighbors are facing. In fact, unemployment rates during each quarter of 2008 were higher in non-metropolitan areas than in metropolitan areas.

Apart from the formulaic spending requirements, you and your Administration have a great deal of discretion when it comes to spending Ohio's significant Recovery funding allocation. I urge you to ensure that our state's rural communities receive their fair share.

My constituents are lucky to have a Governor who, because of his roots, understands their district's needs. I look forward to working with you as we continue to improve our state's economy and strengthen rural America."